

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 281366

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJECT: DEA REQUEST FOR FAA FUNDING OF OPERATION

SEAM/75

1. DEA HAS PROPOSED THAT FUNDS OF SECTION 482, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT (FAA) BE USED TO SUPPORT OPERATION SEAM/75. THE PROPOSAL IS DISCUSSED GENERALLY IN LETTER FROM DEA ADMINISTRATOR JOHN BARTELS TO AMBASSADOR VANCE DATED NOVEMBER 25, 1974, A COPY OF WHICH DEPARTMENT FORWARDED TO EMBASSY NARCOTICS COORDINATOR. IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS, DEA/WASHINGTON OFFICIALS CHARGED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF SEAM/75 PROVIDED MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PROPOSAL, OF WHICH PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS ARE OUTLINED IN FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH. DEPARTMENT REQUESTS EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON PROPOSAL.

2. ACCORDING TO MATERIAL PROVIDED BY DEA, VEHICLE INTERDICTION SYSTEM APPROACH IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE A SELF-CONTAINED, UNIFIED ROAD BLOCK CAPABILITY FOR UPCOMING 1975 ERADICATION/INTERDICTION CAMPAIGN IN MEXICO. THE SYSTEM IS CAPABLE OF BEING OPERATED IN BOTH URBAN AND RURAL AREAS AND OVER SECONDARY ROAD SYSTEMS. THE
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VEHICLE PACKAGE PROVIDES CAPABILITIES FOR DIRECTING

TRAFFIC, INSPECTING VEHICLES, INTERROGATION OF SUSPECTS,

HOLDING SUSPECTS, AREA ILLUMINATION AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH ITS OPERATING BASE. THE SYSTEM CONSISTS OF TWO BASIC SUB-SYSTEMS: THE BASIC VEHICLE AND AN INTERROGATION/HOLDING TRAILER.

3. IN OPERATION SEAM/74, SPECIAL IMPACT INTERDICTION UNITS WITH ROAD BLOCK CAPABILITY WERE CREATED, TO WHICH THE DEA PROVIDED EQUIPMENT, PERSONNEL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT. WE UNDERSTAND THAT DEA PERSONNEL WERE PRESENT DURING THESE INTERDICTION ACTIONS, WHICH OF COURSE INCLUDED SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS OF PEOPLE AND VEHICLES STOPPED BY ROAD BLOCKS. IN THE UPCOMING PROPOSED OPERATION, DEA PARTICIPATION WOULD NORMALLY BE LIMITED TO ONE AGENT PER IMPACT UNIT AND A MEXICAN MFJP AGENT WILL BE IN CHARGE. DEA AGENTS WOULD PARTICIPATE IN AN ADVISORY ROLE WITH THE MFJP IN THE INTERDICTION PROGRAMS AS IN THE ERADICATION ASPECTS OF THE 1975 CAMPAIGN.

4. EMBASSY COMMENTS REQUESTED CONCERNING MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL'S FAMILIARITY WITH AND CONCURRENCE IN USE OF THESE SPECIAL VEHICLES AND PROPOSED DEA PARTICIPATION IN MEXICAN ROAD BLOCK INTERDICTION PROGRAM. EMBASSY SHOULD NOTE THAT ONE OF SPECIAL PURPOSES TO BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH USE OF THESE VEHICLES IS INTERROGATION AND HOLDING OF SUSPECTS. AMERICAN CITIZENS CONCEIVABLY MAY BE AMONG THOSE APPREHENDED AT ROAD BLOCKS, AND WE WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON WEIGHT TO BE GIVEN THIS POSSIBILITY IN REACHING FINAL DECISION ON USG FUNDING OF THESE VEHICLES.

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